

5 Social Skills for Workplace Success

What are social skills? Social skills are those we use to interact with other people. Social skills include both verbal skills (the way you speak to other people) and nonverbal skills (your body language, gestures, and eye contact).

Why Employers Value Social Skills

Social skills are important soft skills — these are personal qualities related to interacting with others. Almost every job requires social skills.

If you work on a team, you need to be able to get along with others. If you work with clients, you need to be able to listen to their questions and concerns. If you are a manager, you need to be able to motivate employees.

Even if your job does not involve interacting with other people very much, you still need the social skills to interact with your employer and colleagues.

Because social skills are so important, almost every employer looks for job candidates with these skills. It is therefore important that you have strong social skills, and that you show these in your resume, cover letter, and interview.

Read below for a list of the top five social skills that employers seek in candidates for employment. Also read below for tips on how to demonstrate that you have social skills throughout your job search.

Top 5 Social Skills

1. Empathy

Empathy is a very important skill. To interact well with others, you need to be able to understand how they are feeling.

Empathy is especially important when dealing with clients who come to you with questions or problems. You need to express genuine concern for their issues, and help solve them.

2. Cooperation

Cooperation is especially important when you work on a team. You need to be able to work with others to reach a common goal.

However, even if you do not work on a team, cooperation is still important. You need to be able to work alongside colleagues to help achieve the goals of your organization.

3. Verbal Communication

Verbal communication is an extremely important social skill in every job. You need to express yourself using clear language that others can understand. You need to be able to speak in person, on the phone, and via email with others.

4. Listening

Another important communication skill that helps you interact well with others is listening. You need to be able to listen carefully to what your employer tells you to do, to what your colleagues say in a meeting, and to what your employees ask of you. You need to listen to clients' concerns, and express that you have listened carefully. People respond well to others when they feel they are being heard.

5. Nonverbal Communication

While verbal communication is an important skill, so is nonverbal communication. Through your body language, eye contact, and facial expressions, you can express that you are an empathetic person who is listening carefully to others.

How to Show Your Social Skills During a Job Search

You can demonstrate that you have all of these social skills throughout your job search process. Firstly, you can simply use these social skill words in your resume. In the description of your work history, or in your resume summary (if you have one), you might want to use some of these key words.

Secondly, you can use these words in your cover letter. In the body of your letter, you can mention one or two of these skills, and give a specific example of a time when you demonstrated those skills at work.

Thirdly, you can use these skill words in an interview. Make sure you have at least one example for a time you demonstrated each of the top five skills listed here. Of course, each job will require different skills and experiences, so make sure you read the job description carefully, and focus on the skills listed by the employer.

Finally, you can also display these social skills throughout your interview.

Make sure to use nonverbal communication that conveys your interest in the interview and the job. Speak clearly, and be sure to listen carefully to the questions asked. Simply displaying that you have social skills can show the employer that you have the interpersonal skills needed for the job.

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